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G. A. Oxon.
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THE CASE OF Mr. *VAUGHAN*, Vicar of DUNCHTEW, TRULY STATED; AND His Innocence Vindicated, FROM THE Aſperſions of *Tho. Overton*; AND THE MISREPRESENTATIONS OF Sir *Thomas Wheate*;

Who ſubſcribed a Letter of Requeſt of the ſaid *Overton*. Wherein the ſaid Vicar is ſlandered and abuſed in a very ſcandalous and opprobious manner.

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When such as these sit at the Helm of Country Business, the Operation of their Malice and Favour is obvious. The dissenting Votary *shall be call'd and pay less; but the* Shepherd *shall be singled out from amongst the Flock to bear the Burdens. If such as these wrest their Commission to Favour, or discountenance whom they please; such a lame executing of a Commission, is no wonderful Qualification in a* Senator.

The last Senate was so very sensible of the Evil couched in the Premises, that they endeavour'd to prevent it by effectual Remedies, the two Bills for the Qualification of a Justice and a Senator. It is pity to see so many mean Persons in Commission with Gentlemen, Men of Families and Estates; of Knowledge in the Law, and Integrity in the Execution of it. Such as these are put in, in several Counties, only to serve a Party, and to bugbear the Country People, and so privateer 'em of their Votes by scandalous Methods.

When any Case is moved before the Bench, such as these are, mute, they can neither plead nor argue; but if it happens to be the Case of one of their Votaries, the whole Conclave *of these Mutes will appear; whether right or wrong, some one or other is prevailed to open; and rather than it should be decided by Law, it is their way to put it to the Vote, being sensible that it makes more for their Interest to decide it by* Voting, *than by the Equity of* Law. *And then those that sate as* Cyphers *upon the Bench before, can then do Service by their* Numbers. *This is a Task far more easie than the Knowledge of the Law; for that requires Study, and Brains, as well as Honesty. Hence it often happens, that a plain Case supported by Equity and Evidence, is determined by* Interest *and* Faction, *rather than by a due Course of* Law. *How precarious must the Distribution of Justice be, when it is lodged in the Hands of Persons divided in Principles, Interest and Designs?* ——

In Assessments and Appeals, the Case is much the same; a factious Spirit is bold and confident, the injured may offer Reason, and spend the best of Arguments; but what then, you talk against Interest? *That, and not* Law, *is become the Standard and Rule of some Men's Proceedings.*

Suppose a Tenant to a Commissioner, lends him 100 *l. upon Bond; some time after an Act of Parliament obliges all such Bonds to be produced, and certified by the Commissioners, in order to be taxed; if not, the Creditor to lose the Benefit of the Bond. Now if a Commissioner, who is obliged to be strict, that all such Bonds should be produced, should stifle this, and oblige the Subject to be disobedient to the Law, Did he not at the same time abuse his Trust, and act contrary to his Oath, and all this to evade the Thoughts of being in Debt to his own Tenant? How much Men value their* Credit! *And how little they regard* Justice! *as if they esteemed an outward* Reputation *before Men, rather than a sincere* Conscience *before God.*

A Free-holder has a Right to vote; an Heir to an Estate in Reversion, if he should be dabbled with to procure a sham Writing, to grant him an actual Possession of the said Estate before an Election; and by another like Writing to surrender it after the Election: And all this to vote for a peculiar Candidate; Do such as strive to enter the Senate by undue measures give Proof of their Honesty and Integrity? Are such Practices consistent with free Elections? Are Men of cor-

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rupt Consciences truly Qualified to defend the ancient Rights of Church *and* State, *as they expreſt it in their Letters of* Canvaſs.?

If a Clergyman defend the Rights of his Church, and ſeek to relieve his Diſtreſs in the way of Equity, he is then eſteem'd Troubleſome, Contentious, and Quarrelſome, by the Party. One of the moſt Villainous Phanatick Steward, or a moſt vicious Pariſhoner, ſhall have their ill Cauſe eſpouſed and defended; and an innocent Prieſt *ſhall be* traduced *in his* Character, *and his Cauſe miſrepreſented to the Herd; the Mince-pyes at* Glympton *could not well go down without them, the Merry Tale of the Parſon and the Steward, the Knight took pleaſure to delude the diſſenting Crowd. Such always believe their mighty Oracle;* Truth *or* Falſhood *is equally digeſted by ſuch . . . . . ſo it do's Service to the Party.*

Our late Elections have very much divided the Affections of the Subjects, and have made 'em look a Squint upon each other; and ſuch as were not the Head of factious Parties, and met with diſappointments, their Spirits are imbittered to their Superiours; they ſtill ſwinge, they carry it fair, they uſe the ſmiling Channel; but the Votaries that move in a lower Orb *they can ſhew their* Teeth, *and vent their* Malice. *Woe be to the* Prieſt *that oppoſes 'em: The* Blackguard *are all* Tartars; *and if we may believe the Reports of ſome of theſe Gentlemen, as readily as they do of others, it was reported of one of 'em, that he wiſhed all the Clergy in Hell: A wonderful inſtance of* Moderation!

The Methods practiſed in the Elections of a late Reign, promoted Animoſities in great abundance; the knack of canvaſſing, and the rigging of Parties were the Myſtery of Iniquity then as well as now; and where private Piques and Revenge were things principally aim'd at it, renders its promoters more ignominious; the Service *of the Country was the Maſk and Pretence; the gratification of their own humours was more Chiefly aimed at.*

And indeed it was very amazing that a Perſon, the Heir to a good eſtate abroad, yet having not a Freehold actually in his Poſſeſſion in a certain County, ſhould ſtand to be the Repreſentative of the People; that carryed a great deal of impudence, that he ſhould diſpoſe of all the Eſtates in the County, where he was poſſeſt of none himſelf! What a Diminution is intended here, that a Perſon ſhould thus Cope with the Dignitaries of his County; Men of large Eſtates, and whoſe Merits were no leſs: Men that thus promote Diviſions in their County, muſt have abundance *to anſwer for; Tho' every one has a Right, if qualyfied, to vote, or ſtand, yet this will not legitimate illegal Practices; ſuch Elections were the Flood-gates of Iniquity.*

When Men have once Sacrificed their Conſcience to their Intereſt, and are hoodwink'd *in a Faction, it is no wonder that they are acted by a Spirit of* Prejudice, *and led away by Fury and Madneſs, that they may not liſten to the* Truth *and* Reaſon *of Things.*

The firſt information in any Caſe ſhould make no impreſſion upon a Magiſtrate; till both Parties have had a fair hearing. One Story is always good, till another is heard; Parties generally relate their own Caſe in Favour of themſelves; Self-love and Self-intereſt ſway the Affections of the unwary; It argues a Defect in a Judge to believe and prejudge; till he has heard the pleadings on both ſides.

Suppose he has from one of his own party received an Information; yet, before th' other be summoned to appear, and the Cause heard, It argues Imprudence and Weakness in the Magistrate, if concerned, to asperse his Person, to run down his Cause, and discourage him from a fair Tryal: If matters should appear quite otherwise, and the Equity of the Law should carry the Chase to th' other side; what a Reflection wou'd this be to so Rash a Magistrate! I appeal to the Conscience of a certain Quality, as to the Truth of the like instance. When the Votaries of a different Party appear before a certain Magistrate, the dissenting Criminal is treated with the mild Words of respective Language; But if Justice be demanded, the Execution of it is extraordinary; he first looks over Dalton; *then his Catalogue of the Poll; where he finds the Name of the Phanatick Crew. And indeed these are as much Saints, as* Ravillac, *and others in the Saints Gallery at* Rome; *but however, they go not off without a full Dose, and Favour too boot; But as for th' others, let 'em go and be*——

But towards the Levitical Order he is full of Grace and Tenderness; these instances will prove it: When Dr. Halton *and his learned Friends, pursued the nimble fourfooted Innocence in his Liberty; he ordered his Pack with a full Cry to be drawn the same way, and so interrupted their Sport. This Act of civility was the Subject of his Boast and* Jests *afterwards.*

A Bigot *for a Party can never contain himself within the Rules of* Discretion; *not long since, one of that Eminence reviled a Clergyman from a Bench of Justice, for a silly Trifle. His Kinsman at* Dadington, *whose Family was numerous, and his Income small, was discarded.* Glympton *fell twice Vacant in his Days. But the Noble,* Pat—n *regarded not the Application of a distressed* Priest *of the same* Name *and* Blood.

The Deans *of* Windsor *and* Jersey, *whilst the late Suit was depending, our mighty Friend represented worse than* Furies; *he related that Tryal as carryed on with the utmost* Malice *and* Revenge. *This was the import of his Declaration: Thus the chiefest Dignitaries of the Church were represented as Men of the vilest* Practice. *If such as these must be thus traduced, it is not amazing to see him* Pasquinade *a Vicar.*

These were Strangers *to him, but they were* Priests, *and that is sufficient for Slander and Calumny; the whole Episcopal Order is the Odium of a disappointed* Splenetick, *and a malevolent Tongue is no less injurious to a* Sacerdotal Character, *than a* Maggot *is to a* Peascod. *A Spy-fault takes more delight to pick a hole in a* Black-coat, *than a* Squirrel *does in a Nut-shell; a* Kernel *is not half so sweet to this Keen toothed Animal, as the bespattering of a* Vicar *is to an angry* Knighthood.

In that Parish yonder, there dwells a Magistrate; *and an* Inn-keeper *his Tenant; the Criminal of Misbehaviour makes his first Address to the Fat* Inn-Keeper, *he being flushed with the hopes of his Guest's* Courtesie *and* Spending, *steps up to his old Master, Friend, and Landlord, and makes Report; a Warrant is granted; the Parties appear, and there is always either* FAVOUR *or* Justice, *liberally dispensed; and then away with a full ding to the* Swan *below; and when the fainted Geese enter the* Alehouse, *and Wash and Dapple themselves in full* Bowls, *the Swan* Broods *a Multiplication: For the Landlord counts all the Geese his*

to be Sworn: Well may he advance his Rents when the Fat Host meets with such gainful improvement. O the blessed Relative of Tho. Overton!

Some Mens Practices, tho' of themselves never so Scandalous, are esteemed no Crimes. For there is a certain Party that can vail them over by so favourable a Construction, as to give them quite another Turn, so as they shall be accounted real Vertues; and the innocent Actions of other Persons shall be traduced, and themselves vilified.

There are some whose chief Talent lies in bitter Satyrs; their restless Spirit denies 'em power to Napkin it up: in all companies, they like Serpents hiss their Venome against others. Tea and Chocolat are not more Common at Coffee-House, than this the Entertainment of some Persons. It is become the Sauce of Conversation: and all Discourse is counted Dull and Flat, which has not something of Piquancy, and Sharpness in it against others.

Once upon a time a mighty Donn invited the Populacy to his Christmas Dainties; every Votary in his adjacent Neighbourhood, was to have a Mince-pye for Dinner; and to make the Plum-broth go down the better, the Parson's Tale, like a Christmass Carol, was Cuckowed over to gratifie the Plow-tails: a Morrice-dancer at Whitsontide, by shaking his Leggs encircled with Bells, made not half so much Sport amongst Milk-maids, as Quality did amongst Farmers: the Parson abusing the Steward, was the Cream of his Jest, and the Mirth of his Table.

Whether he made use of most Witt or Oratory, Malice or Slander, against Priesthood, in the frequent Repetition of this Story, needs not a Minutes Consideration to decide; Tho. Hern, in as little a time, as he could swallow a Spoonful of Plum-broth, could easily determine.

It is no small happiness, that such as are great in their Malice, are little in every thing else; and like a Taylors Goose, Hott and Heavy.

The ill Nature and Cruelty of Defamation by an unaccountable mistake passes for Witt, as Cunning does for Wisdom; and he that has not a dextrous Knack, to Stain the Reputation of another, by a Current Fluency of neat Language, is no Cæsar.

The Wit of Man vents its self more naturally in Satyr and Censure, than in Praise and Panegyrick: When Men set themselves to commend, it comes hardly from 'em, and not without great Force and Straining: And if any thing be said fitly in that Kind, it doth hardly relish with most Men: But in the way of invective, the invention is a never failing Spring; saith an ingenious Author.

How little do light and vain Persons consider that a Man's Reputation is too great and tender a Concernment to be jested with; and that a slanderous Tongue bites like a Serpent; and Wounds like a Sword: What can be more barbarous, next to sporting with a Man's Life, than to play the Fool with his Reputation?

Were I to recriminate the going about to procure Hands to the Association, 'twould be a pregnant Subject for Mirth; an Honour thus gained would afford matter for a pleasant Comedy: But his management of Elections in the

THE CASE OF Mr. *VAUGHAN*, Vicar of DUNCHTEW, TRULY STATED.

IN the Year 1704. I was resolved to set my Vicarage to a Tenant, and one *Tho. Overton*, offered himself to me as such; the whole concern being debated in the Presence of his own Friends, who understood Tythes, and the Nature of the Management, and then were actually engaged in Concerns of that Nature; soon after *Overton* came to my House, and Viewed the *Glebe*, and had a particular Account given him of the Tythes, and he was desired to make an inquiry amongst the Parishioners, as to the reallity of what was told to him, upon this Occasion: All things being fairly stated, and the time of the Year requiring a speedy Determination, *Overton* comes to my House, to conclude one way or other.

All our matters being agreed, and a Lease was drawn accordingly by Mr. *Neale*, *Overton*'s Kinsman, and his Brother *Fr. Neale*, was his Security for the Rent. This Lease was to Commence the beginning of *May*. But a few days after the Assignment, I was given to understand that my Tenant was of a suspicious Character, and of a very narrow Circumstance.

Whilst I was under the uneasiness of these thoughts, *Overton* comes to my House, and in my Discourse with him, I told him that if he thought amiss of his Bargain, I would release him; he replied that he was well satisfied: But if it was too dear, he would Work the harder, and pay me honestly; these Words he would upon all Occasion repeat often.

Sometime after I happened to be at *Norton* Fair, where the infamous Character of *Overton* was easily to be told, he being then an Inhabitant at *Sawford*, 2 Miles distant from the Market.

About the beginning of *May*, Mr. *Haywood, Junior*, came to my Pariſh, to receive the Lady *Read's* Rents, being informed that I had ſuch a Perſon for my Tenant, he ſent to ſpeak with me, and when I was with him, he told me that the Occaſion of his ſending to ſpeak with me was, to let me know that my Tenant *Overton* the Year before, was Tenant to the Lady *Chamberlain*; that his Subſtance was ſeized for Rent; that he came to him, being then Under Sheriff, for a Replevy, which he promiſed to grant upon ſuch Security as ſhould anſwer the ſaid Rent to the Lady; to this he made anſwer, that he was provided with two very ſufficient Men for his Security: Mr. *Haywood* took the Names, and made inquiry, and found them very reſponſible.

But when the Bondſmen were produced, and the Bond Sealed, they chanced to be two ſhabby Fellows dreſſed up, to perſonate thoſe two ſubſtantial Perſons, and ſo by this Forgery he procured a Replevy. At laſt the buſineſs was thus compoſed, that the Agent for the Lady took his Bond for 30*l.* which remains unpaid till, as the Lady her ſelf informed me, on the 8th. of *Auguſt* 1705. this matter being brought to ſuch an iſſue, *Overton* comes to *Oxon*, to acquaint Mr. *Haywood*, that he had ſatisfied the Lady. But Mr. *Haywood* being angry, he went out to call a Conſtable to apprehend this Forgerer; *Overton* ſuſpecting all this, took his opportunity, and e're Mr. *Haywood* returned, he was gone off; and could never meet with him ſince; he then threatned as if he would have apprehended him; but I over perſwaded him, and begged his ſilence, but he had intimated ſomething of of this to the Tenant; before I ſpoke with him.

Being returned from Mr. *Haywood* to my own Houſe, where *Overton* was then in actual Poſſeſſion; I met him, and then he asked me what ſort of Man Mr. *Haywood* was, whether a mild Man, a meek Man, or a cruel Man. I was amazed at his Impudence and Hypocriſy; for by this, he would have inſinuated that he never knew this Gentleman. For indeed had he intimated to me his Knowledge of him, he was afraid that I ſhould make inquiry after him, and the conſequence of that would have been this, that Forgery is no good Qualification for a Tenant.

Upon this account I went off much diſſatisfied: For I had not only granted him a whole Leaſe for the Living, but took his Bill for what he had purchaſed of me, and particularly a good Horſe. This Bill I left in the Hands of Mr. *Sharrock* of *Dadington*, whom he was to pay upon a Day of his appointment, But never did, but ſhuffled him off from time to time; and the Bill remained unpaid, when I ſeized upon him.

The Crop upon the Glebe was mine, and being Valued, the Tenant was to have the refuſal of its purchaſe, if we could agree upon Terms. I came there with that Reſolution: But was adviſed not to let him have it. For it was apparent that he had idle Hands and empty Pockets, and could not pay his Work men; his not diſcharging the aforeſaid Bill confirm'd my ſuſpicion of him.

The Tythe-wool was by an Article of our Leaſe to be thus divided; I was to have two parts, the Tenant one; the Tything Man brought all

Notwithstanding the Deductions of Taxes, &c. in the stating of our Accounts, a great part of the Debt due to me upon Bill, remain'd due to me still, which he could not discharge.

After this I demanded my Rent, (for upon his first coming he told me that he had it in his Pocket, and if he spoke the Truth, I said it was reasonable he should then pay it, being it was due) he reply'd, that he was disappointed of Money; he was desir'd to let me know when he would, or could pay? He then said, when he could get Money. After that Mr. *Appletree* and my self had throughly sifted him, we received nothing, but shuffling and dubious Answers. I call'd him aside, and desired to know what he had to pay; for his Stock signified little. He could not satisfie me, that he had either Money, Bonds, &c.

I offer'd to him before the Company, that I would bear with him, provided he could give me better Security; and many other things were propos'd to him; but his Answer was still in the Negative, and had nothing to say, for himself to any Purpose.

This gave me Occasion to tell him, that he ran away by Night with all his Substance from one Landlord, and was seized upon by another; and had committed Forgery, and was much indebted to the Neighbourhood.

After this, I distrained upon him; which I do solemnly declare to God and the whole World, that it was the unwillingest Act that ever I did in all my Life; and I told him it should be kept private. I desired him to fetch his Brother that was his Security for my Rent.

When he came, I told him the Reasons of this Distrain, and desired his Kindness to relieve my Tenant; he returned me this Answer, That he had enough to do to pay his own Rent; and he had done the Part of a Brother towards him already. He advised me to keep what I had distrained; for there were others, to his Knowledge, that were ready to come upon him. I then asked, why he would be his Security, which was the greatest Motive of my granting to him a Lease? He answer'd me, that he knew him to be an idle Person, he loved to talk great, but was worth nothing when he came to my Vicarage; and that his Sister's Tears, and his Mother's Perswasion had (against his Inclination) prevail'd upon him to become his Security. I told him, it was expected that he should hold the Lease till the Term of Years was expired; he begged that I would take it into my own Hands, for that his Brother was unable to go on; and he had been with him to trust him with Seed, but was denied, the Season of the Year being almost spent, and the Tilf was not sowed. Before his Brother, I got his Consent to plow it, and sow it at my own Charge. To this End, I hired one to thrash some Seed-Wheat, and sent another Man to plow the Land. This is sufficient to convince any, what Sort of Tenant I had. The Winter Corn being but one part in three of the whole Crop. A Truth well known to the whole Parish.

Whilst his Goods remained under a Distrain, he had not one Friend or Relation to speak in his Behalf, or that offered to redeem him.

And when we came to a Resolution to refer our matters, I had Mr. *Appletree*, and Mr. *Stiles* to act for me; he had Mr. *Eagle* an Attorney, and his Brother, to act for him.

His Neceſſity was ſo great, that I was obliged to accept of *Overton*'s own Propoſal by the Hands of his Referees; which was, That he would be accountable to me for all the Profits he received upon the Premiſes. The Particulars being Stated by the Attorneys, and conſented to by us, with this Proviſo, That we might have ſome time allowed to examine and review the Particulars, to prevent Miſtakes on either Side.

When we met the Second time, Mr. *Appletree* asked the other Party, that if they were not ſatisfied with their own Propoſals, we were ready to offer Propoſals of our own, that ſhould anſwer the End of Equity to us both; their Anſwer was, That they would ſtand by their own Propoſal, according to our laſt Meeting; which was agreed to, and ſubſcribed by *Overton* and my ſelf before Witneſſes. I have this ſtill by me, and I am ready to ſhew it any that ſhall deſire it.

What few Cattle were ſold, *Overton* was deſired to do it himſelf; and accordingly Mr. *Goodwin* ſold ſome at *Dadington* Fair, and others were ſold by *Overton* himſelf at home. And then as to the Houſhold Goods, one *Samuel Maynard*, of whom *Overton* had bought a Furnace upon Truſt a little before, and could not pay for it; and being now under a Diſtrain, I had much a-do to prevail upon *Overton* to let him have that Furnace again, altho' I was conſenting to it.

This honeſt Man, *Samuel Maynard* of *Dadington*, being by this Inſtance ſenſible of my Kindneſs to him, as well as my Juſtice to *Overton*, laid down ſuch a Sum of Money by my Perſwaſion, as was to make up my Quantity according to our Agreement, with this Proviſo, that I ſurrender'd my Right and Title to the Goods; that a publick Sale ſhould be cry'd, and as much of the Goods to be ſold, as amounted to what *Maynard* had laid down. All this was acted by the Conſent of Mr. *Overton*, and a Paper drawn up by Mr. *Langſton*, to that End and Purpoſe, ſubſcribed by *Overton* and my ſelf, and deliver'd to *Maynard*, to authorize him to make a Sale. After this, I went for *Fulham*.

But before I cloſe this, it will not be improper here to add, that the Hay in the Reek-Yard, and three poor Horſes in the Stable, could not be diſpos'd of; the Hay was then cheap, and his Horſes battered, poor, and mean. My Referees did all they could that this ſhould not fall to my Share; but *Overton* being in no Likelihood either to ſell or redeem 'em, I found my ſelf under a Neceſſity, either to purchaſe 'em, or loſe above half my Rent; ſo that I was prevail'd upon to buy 'em of *Overton* as they were appraiſed; and when we had agreed for 'em thus before Witneſs, I offer'd to abate him 10 *s.* of what I allow'd him, if he could redeem 'em, and this I can prove ſtill; ſo that the Hay and Horſes became mine by the Conſent and Agreement of *Overton*, and not by Vertue of the Diſtrain, as appears in the State of our Accounts, ſubſcribed by both Parties, and witneſſed.

When I had left the Country, and was gone to a place near *London*; *Overton* makes a Noiſe, that I denied him a publick Sale; that I kept the Horſes and the Hay to my ſelf, being of more Value than what they were appraiſed at; and that he had Friends that would lay down the Money, but I

Mr. *Applerice* and Mr. *Dowly* signified this to me, and I immediately sent 'em an Order to allow him the Horses still, and the Hay at the Price they were allowed to me at; and in Case any was sold, a Deduction being made, and things fairly agreed, I freely allowed him to redeem the Horses and the Hay; but after all his Boast, he had neither Credit nor Friends to redeem him.

But before I departed the Country, the Leases were cancelled, and our Releases signed in the Presence of Mr. *Laughton* and *Maynard*. At this Juncture of time, *Overton* was very importunate to continue in the Vicarage-House for some time, till he could remove. I was averse to this, because none would permit such as they to come under their Roof. I offer'd a Widow Three Crowns to admit of him and his Family into an empty House that she had; but notwithstanding her Necessity, she refused my Offer. Seeing that neither Love nor Money could procure 'em any Habitation, I condescended, that after he had given me Possession of my House, he should continue till St. *Thomas*'s Day, provided he would give me Bond then quietly to depart, which I did; but notwithstanding my Kindness and his Promise, and his Bond, he continued in my House till about the middle of *August*. It being now the 16*th* of *August*, I do not hear that he is ejected.

This Instance of his Dishonesty, has put me to these Inconveniencies, that the Sheriff is employ'd to eject him. His Continuance in my House, has deprived me of letting my Living; and I am oblig'd to hire Servants to look after my Business; and the House has suffer'd much by his being there.

Yet so notorious is this vain Person, that he now beggs about the Country, and setts me forth as a hard and merciless Landlord; that I thrust him, his Wife and Children, out of Doors to shift for themselves. To satisfie the World, I do here solemnly declare, That when all matters was agreed, and we had releas'd each other, I sent for his Hay-makers, his Man, and Maid, and some others, and I paid them all; and I took their Acquittances, and gave them to *Overton*'s Wife. This Action of mine, and what I did afterwards, cost me almost 7 *l*. A mighty Instance of a hard and merciless Landlord!

About the Beginning of last *March*, I went to my Parish, to see if this honest Tenant had quitted my House; a few Minutes after my Arrival, my Servant and my Tything-man went unto the House with me; *Overton* being in the Garden, I locked the Door; there were two Children in the House, the Eldest took the Youngest in her Arms, and went out to her Father at another Door; and having lock'd that Door also, we could hear her Father's Blows most unmercifully, and the Child crying, because she came out of the House. *Overton* being out, he took a Pole and wrenched open one of the Doors and came in; but I would not suffer my Men to make any violent Resistance. He had no sooner got in, but he ran up into one of the Chambers, and brought down an old antiquated Sword, and made as if he would run me through; he did something of the like Nature (as far as I remember) to the other two Men. Now in my Absence he tells, it was I that beat the Daughter; whereas, he whose Hands committed the Fact, must needs know to the contrary. I have Evidence to confirm the Truth of what I say. This

After I had received such a Multiplicity of wrongs, I expected to hear of his Ejectment out of my House by Mr. *Haywood*.

But quite contrary to my expectation, upon the 8th of this present *August*, there comes one Mr. *Keys* an Attorney to my House at *Fullham*; and desires to speak with me, in behalf of one *Overton*, whom he was informed, I much injured, and by way of Satisfaction, he demanded this years Crop; If not, he had orders to sue me; the whole of what he laid to my Charge was to this effect.

That I distrained upon him for Rent the next day after it was due, and he paid me 4 *l.* for a Horse 6 days before I seized upon him, and I would then allow him no more that 20 *Shillings* for him; that his Goods and Cattle were appraised at an under Rate, and it was by my interest that prevail'd upon the Parishioners, so to Rate them; and when I had so done, I kept his Horses, and his Hay, and would not suffer him to redeem 'em; that I turned his Family out of Doors, that I beat his Girl, that the Tyth-wool was wholly his, but that I received the Money for it; and made him accountable for it notwithstanding; and that the Bishop told him, if that he could prove all this, he promised him to deprive me.

My answer to this Gentleman was according to the Contents of these Papers; and to Certifie all that I said, I shewed him *Overton's* Acquittances, and the Account fairly stated, subscribed by *Overton*, who was then in *London*; and to prove the Contrary to his own Face; which this Gentleman did, and was abundantly satisfied; the Lady *Chamberlain* was then at his Father's House.

This Lady told me that he addressed himself to her, to deliver a Letter to the Bishop of *London*, to represent his Case to him; and so to render me obnoxious. But the Lady is otherwise satisfied as well as the Attorney.

It is presumed that his Stories have gained Proselites in *Oxon*, and such as are Enemies to Priesthood, were easily drawn into the Delusion. He has alway by him two Letters of Request, to support his Lyes, and to perswade 'em to believe the hard Measures he met with.

The first Letter of Request gives me the Character of a hard and a Mercileſs Landlord for seizing upon his Goods and Cattle, which were sold almost at any Rate, to the utter Ruin of himself, his Wife, and Children.

When *Overton's* Goods were distrained, it was according to an Act of Parliament, and what was done was according to the Direction of that Act, our difference was fairly referred to the Judgment of others; I accepted of an Agreement upon their own Terms; as for *Overton's* Cattle, he had but 4 poor Cows, 3 Horses, 2 Calves, and a few Piggs, most of these he sold himself, and the rest by his order; and if they were sold at an under Rate, he ought to blame none but himself; and there is nothing in all this to prove the Landlord hard and Mercileſs.

many years, and received many instances of Civility and Respect from him; and when the Malice of others was very keen to injure me, this Gentleman had the integrity to vindicate my Innocence, and to do me Justice. As for the other Justice Sir *T. W.* (I suppose to be Sir *Tho. Wheat*) before the late Elections I had the Honour of his acquaintance, and have been civilly received at his House. But being obliged by Principles and Intereſt to th' other Candidates, I loſt the Friendſhip and Goodwill of Sir *T. W.* and ſince in repeated inſtances he has eſpouſed Infamy and Baſeneſs in oppoſition to my Innocence: which was not very honourable. But notwithſtanding I was publickly vindicated by an honourable Peer the E. of *Abingdon*; and all the Juſtices upon the Bench but one: Mr. *Mappier* is not unacquainted with ſome other hard Meaſures I met with from a certain Perſon; how far this may embitter the Spirit of this Gentleman, as to put his Name to ſuch a Letter; I leave it to all to determine as they pleaſe.

Were I ſo ill a Man as here repreſented, my Pariſhioners, who knew the whole Concern, were the proper Perſons, to certifie the Truth of what I acted in this Affair: But being ſenſible of its falſhood, they refuſed to ſubſcribe, *Raves Burroughs* only excepted, a Man of ſome credit formerly; but is now in his declining Years, and quite loſt as to himſelf. The Letter mentions, *We ſome of the Inhabitants of the aboveſaid place*, &c. and proves this plurality by a ſingle inſtance of one Man, *viz.* *R. B.* and to make a Grammatical Sence of this, they interlined theſe other Words, *and elſewhere near thereunto*; and this is partly falſe, and partly true; *Francis Neale* dwells at *Pillerton* in *Warwickſhire* far diſtant, the 3 laſt Subſcribers are inhabitants of 2 Neighbouring Pariſhes, ſo that the Words, *and elſewhere near thereunto*, cannot be applied to *Francis Neale*, though they may have Right to the laſt three. Before the Interlineation, the Subſcription ſignified that they were Inhabitants of *Dunchtew* all of 'em; what could be the Malicious deſign of this, but to impoſe upon the People, as if my Pariſhioners did Certifie the Truth of what is alledged in the Contents of that Letter?

The *Heſters*, are rigid Fanaticks, turbulent to their own Miniſter, and ſeem to be under the Aſcendant of an Enthuſiaſtick Spirit; Mens Practices ſhew their Principles; what Mr. *Bevan* offered to make out againſt 'em, and their uſage of *Francis Olds*, are infallible Teſtimonies of theſe Mens Infamy.

As for *Samuel Maynard*, I always ſhewed him a particular Regard; and as I mentioned before, it was by my Perſwaſion and Conſent he recovered his Furnace, and then he was up to the Elbows with me; but he turns now Cat in Pann: he was a Witneſs, and a Subſcriber to moſt of the Papers betwixt *Overton* and my ſelf, and ſeemed very well ſatisfied that I had acted fairly. But ſince, to his Scandal be it ſpoken, he joyns his Name to that of the *Heſters*, and Subſcribes to the Contents of the Letter, as if *Overton*'s Goods were ſold at any Rate to his Ruin; tho' He was the Man intruſted by both of us to ſell 'em to the beſt Advantage. What a mixture of Hypocriſie, Imprudence and double Dealing is this? How inconſiſtent it is to ſubſcribe Papers quite different? But if Men will prove themſelves either Knaves or Hypocrites, or both, who can help it? Why, *Samuel*, I was more

 kind

The Foundation of all this was from hence: The next day after our Agreement, I left the Country, and but a very few there knew what that Agreement was; so that he had the Advantage of my absence, and the unacquaintedness of most as to our dispute, and the Terms of our Composition; his Misrepresentation of me being no ways opposed, it gained much upon the Credulity of some People; Sir *T. W.* was likewise busie according to Custom, to support him by a like Relation. Thus was I *Glymptonized*, and distressed by an usual Act of modern *Oliverianism*: All the Advantage that I had to a Disbelief of all this, was from the infamy of *Overton*, and a certain Name fixed to the Petition; and as a certain Gentleman told me, as soon as he saw that Name, he was satisfied from what Mine the whole came.

Overton, buoyed up by a Paper upst——r shirt——n C——ty, and the belief of the many he had slandered, thrived like a Snowball: And whereas others gained Bread by the Sweat of their Brow, here the Malicious Slander of a lying Tongue, procured a Loaf for the Belly, and Coin for the Pocket.

A successful Impudence stirred up his Spirits to approach my Diocesan; and as he Relates it, he met with a very favourable Reception from his Lordship; whether our worthy Knight, at whose House my Lord dined, prepared the way, I will not determine: I presume his Lordship was not so easily wrought upon, as to believe a Vagrant: He is a Person of more Prudence and Consideration, than to believe a plausible Story, or to intermeddle with the Temporal Affairs of his Clergy: *Bishops* cloathed with Ecclesiastick Power, love to keep within the Limits of their proper Jurisdiction; They know full well that the Temporal Courts of Equity are most proper to relieve the injured; tho' their Advice is valuable in any Case, and ought to be embraced as an Act of Favour; yet they will scarce assume to themselves a Power over the Clergy, that is altogether foreign to their Station; and therefore I will no more believe what *Overton* relates of my Lord *Bishop*, than I presume he did the false Reports of *Overton*, with respect to me.

Thus he play'd his temporal Pranks, he after this thought upon a new Device, and Masks it over with a Religious Pretence; he flies from his Parish-Church, and becomes the Auditor of another Clergyman every Sabbath, whose excellent Talent, and Pulpit Gift, had captivated the whole Powers of his Soul; but his Sundays Dinner of the Aged Rector was by some supposed, to be the most pleasing Te----t; a Plum-pudding to him was more acceptable than the best of Sermons. During his Religious Fit and Flash of Friendship, he squeezed a Guinea by way of Loan, from his adored Priest, which he refuses to pay; and when his Brazen-face, came to *Brazen-Nose-C.* he was always cherished with a Cup of the Creature; 'till at last his Impertinence and frequent Visits became no less troublesome to the Rector than the Curate.

When the Lord *Bishop* confirmed at *South Aston* th'other day, *Overton* and his Tribe appear'd zealous to receive the Episcopal Benediction: But those

reaſon to believe, that the ſaid Sir T. *W.* has been an Aſſiſtant to *Overon* in his unjuſtifiable Practices againſt me; I take this opportunity to acquaint Sir *Tho. W.* that if he thinks fit to meet me, according to the ſaid Propoſal, I will then undertake to vindicate my ſelf, from his Miſrepreſentations; but if he refuſes me ſuch an Opportunity, ſome other Meaſures ſhall be taken to clear my Reputation.

Mr. *Cudworth*, having informed Sir T. *W.* of theſe matters, and delivered the Papers to him relating to the Accounts; and thoſe other Papers under the Hands of the Clergy; together with the aboveſaid Propoſal: unto all which Sir *Tho. W.* would not vouchſafe to anſwer.

Sir *Tho. W.* having refuſed me an opportunity to purge my ſelf from his Aſperſions, and ſince I am charged and reported to be guilty of Perjury, in taking an Oath, that my Living was not 60 *l. per Annum* Value; to this abominable Falſity I anſwer, That at that time my Aſſeſſor upon Oath refuſed to Rate me after that Value; My Tenant and others being ready to Atteſt the real Value to be a great deal leſs; and beſides I will yet, if required, make Oath that it was not near the like Value, *at that time.*

But the Decrees granted in the *Exchequer*, in behalf of my Dues, have ever had their due Efficacy and Vertue ſince that time.

Are Mens Reputation ſo cheap, as to be the Sport of Men in their Humours, Pride and Paſſion, and when Men through Miſtake or Malice have been Acceſſaries to the Defamation of others? yet when they may be ſatisfied even to a Demonſtration, that they were miſinformed, and that there were no real grounds for their Malice; not to Retract and acknowledge their Error in ſuch a Caſe, argues a diſingenuous Temper, and an implacable Spirit.

The chiefeſt Quality, if thus guilty, becomes Criminal; the Greateneſs of their Perſonage implies no Diſpenſation, their Offence is not leſs upon the Account of their Honour; their Intereſt may ſecure 'em from the Equity of a penal Law; but till they have Atoned for their Fault, and repaired the Injury, they cannot plead Innocence.

To obſerve a Gentlemans Tongue glib and fluent in miſrepreſenting an inoffenſive Perſon, and Act the *Orator* upon a Subject of Slander and Defamation; yet upon a due Information, when Reaſon and Evidence are offered ſufficient for his Conviction, to be then Deaf and Silent ſhews Guilt.

Honour and Innocence united in one and the ſame Perſon dares Vindicate themſelves falſly charged; and when miſtaken, are always ingenuous in their Acknowledgment. It is the trueſt Sign of a degenerate Spirit, and a Narrow little Soul, to be Silent in either inſtance. Nothing but a Guilt in the Conſcience, can impoſe Silence upon the Tongue. It is the greateſt Derogation to Quality, to commit ſuch Actions as an honeſt Peaſant would Bluſh at.

Upon the whole I cannot but obſerve that Sir T. *W's.* Name to the Petition, ſerved the Intereſt of his Favourite *Overton*: So his very Silence ſpeaks forth my Innocence; and I do not doubt but that he who weighs the Contents of theſe Sheets will judge,

That,

That his Silence in this caſe is the beſt Oratory againſt himſelf, and an Advocate in my behalf; his repeated Relations of *Tho. Overton's* Caſe, will not ſo much injure a Reputation, as a *Glympton* Silence, the beſt of Oratory, ſerve to vindicate an innocent Prieſt.

When the Knight ſpoke and ſubſcribed, he abuſed himſelf, and Stained his Honour: But the Silence of the Tongue in Spight of a Malicious Mind, ſets my innocence to Rights: Nay, it is no leſs than a total Purgation of me, from his Aſperſions for theſe many years paſt.

It is great Pity that any ſhould be a Juſtice of the Peace only upon the Account of an Eſtate; eſpecially ſuch as are guilty of theſe mean things. Acts of Imprudence and Indiſcretion, a wilful Failure are Crimes in private Perſons, how much more when they affect Magiſtracy?

The Office of a Juſtice is a weighty Employ; it is Pity to ſee the Deſign of its Commiſſion perverted, and the Name of a Juſtice fixed to the Petition of a Forgerer. An idle Vagrant becomes thus qualified to abuſe the Innocent, and to travel the Country to rob the well diſpoſed of undeſerved Charity.

If a Prieſt is ſuppoſed to tread a ſide, and make the leaſt Trip, it is preſently made a Theam of Drollery, and Divertiſement by a certain Gentleman. Whereas the Defects in executing his own Commiſſion are more *numerous*, and yet leſs *faulty*. For *Saints* are always *ſinleſs*: And they are much to be blamed that think a *Juſtice* in his *temporal Commiſſion* is more *deficient*, than a *Prieſt* in a *Spiritual* one. The Honour of a *Baronet* gained by a *ſubſcribed Aſſociation* cannot be *ſtained* by a *Subſcription* to a *Forgerer*.

As to the Truth of what is here related betwixt Mr. *Vaughan* and *Overton*, it will be atteſted by theſe Perſons, Mr. *Daviſe* a Clegyman, Mr. *Appletree* an Attorney, and *William Dubbs* and others, I do not doubt of; though I did not ſee 'em whilſt I was in the Country.

Overton being ſenſible that theſe Meaſures are taken to undeceive the World, abſconds himſelf in *London*; and one Sunday he made his appearance at *Fulham* to relate and diſperſe his villanous Stories, and pretends to fix in *London*, and be a Plague to me, as his Friend Mr. *Key*, was pleaſed to term it: And to prove what he ſaith, he quotes Sir *Tho. W.* and the Clergy who ſubſcribed one of his Letters of Requeſt; but not that ſcandalous one with his Name ſubſcribed to it.

Sir *Tho.* as appears from theſe following Papers under the Hands of thoſe Clergy that ſubſcribed, Mr. *Hacker* only excepted, a Perſon I am ſatisfied who is of the ſame Sentiments with Mr. *Cockſon*, as to this Affair, as he the ſaid Mr. *Cockſon* told me; I am ſorry I had not time to wait upon him.

The